

ENGINEMAN CHIEF ~ RAYMOND MARSHALL, ENC (SS) ~ A "TWENTY YEAR MAN"



A junior in high school back in 1937, I visited the Navy Recruiting Station in Paterson, NJ, and filled out an application for enlistment. In December of 1938, I received the letter for my time of enlistment, which was 19 JAN 1939 at 90 Church Street, NYC, NY. As part of the big expansion to 125,000 men, I had twelve weeks of training in Newport, RI,

and by June, I was aboard the USS Texas heading for the west coast. There, I went aboard the USS Mahan DD-364. In September, we went to Hawaii as part of the Hawaii Detachment. In early 1940, I caught the USS Henderson for a very unwanted trip to the Asiatic Fleet, where I boarded the USS Canopus (AS-9) in Tsingtoa, China. Canopus was an old "banana boat" converted to a sub tender. A few months later, I was transferred to the USS Porpoise SS-172.

The Porpoise was a riveted hull submarine which could go to 150 feet before leaking. I did my sub training aboard the USS Pidgeon (decompression chamber and lung training), and qualified in submarines in March 1941. I did six war patrols aboard the Porpoise. We were in the Battle of the Java Sea and the Battle of Midway. After the sixth patrol, the Porpoise was in bad shape, and was sent to New London as a training submarine. I went on to refrigeration school, and then on to Manitowoc, WI, to put the USS Guavina SS-362 in commission. After a month of liberty, the SS-362 was commissioned on 23 DEC 1943. We soon headed down the Mississippi to Algiers, LA for refitting and then proceeded to Pearl Harbor. **The USS GUAVINA (Above: with launching timbers on the building ways at the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Company - Manitowoc, WI - 29-AUG-43)** made six war patrols, sank 14 ships and rescued 21 downed fliers. With five of the patrols rated combat pin or stars, they were fairly normal, but, #5 which started on 1-25-'44 continued until 3-5-'44. After a few days at sea, we were abruptly alarmed to hear "fish loose in tube #9!" Almost immediately, the captain ordered "Fire #9!" We knew the torpedo fired, since you could hear the swishing noise. A moment later, the boat shook from end to end from the explosion. It was a little unnerving. About ten minutes later, word came again, "fish loose in tube #10!" Captain Lockwood again ordered "Fire #10!" We all waited to hear movement, but none was heard. There was no impact from the firing. Then a frightened voice shouted from the After Room "we're taking on water!" The drain pump was put on line immediately, and orders were given to prepare to abandon the After Room, if necessary. We all wondered if #10 was going to blow us all to "Kingdom Come." The boat rested at all stop, and Lt. Neenan went over the side to see if the fish was stuck in the tube. We flooded down forward to about a 30% angle. Lts. Garrow and Neenan inspected the tubes, and found no fish. The events of this day (27-JAN-1944) remain with me always.

On 20 February 1944, around 0730, watch was finishing up breakfast, when the general alarm sounded battle stations. Almost immediately, the captain called out, "Stand by, Forward." "Fire 1, Fire 2, Fire 3, Fire 4!" There was one loud explosion after another, each time the torpedoes hit their mark. Then, the order came, "Hard right rudder!" We quickly went deeper, until we slid along the sandy bottom. Our depth was 130 feet, and we stopped and rigged for silent running. Three destroyers started their runs dropping depth charges. One destroyer would stop and ping, the other two made the runs. This went on until about 1500. 98 charges were dropped, and we could hear the click of the igniter before the charges went off. We were badly damaged, but not enough to try to escape. I blew bow bouyancy and safety to attempt to get us out of the mud. After two attempts, we finally started to the surface. After one hour submerged, we blew all tanks, put all four engines on line, and headed out to deep water. We assessed damage and started repairs, and it took about four days before we were back to our station. At the end of our patrol, we were ordered to Subic Bay for repairs. One day out of Subic, we were riding on the surface in the safety lane, with our "colors flying," when a PBM was sighted a distance of 20 miles away. We tried IFF with no answer, and finally at about 2 miles, the lookouts spotted bombay doors open, so we immediately made a crash dive with about a 15% down angle. At about 350 feet, two bombs exploded close to us. once again, the boat shuttered, but fortunately there was no damage. It was the worst run I had ever experienced. My combat pin has 9 stars. After 12 patrols, ten of which were successful, I'm proud to wear them. ~Ray Marshall ~